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In a recent number of the *Comptes Rendus* M. DESLANDRES of Paris describes some experiments made by him having the same object in view. He employed two prisms which were exactly alike, placing them at a considerable distance apart, with their refracting edges parallel but the base of one turned in a direction opposite that of the base of the other. The sunlight which passed through the first prism was decomposed, and a small portion of the spectrum thus formed was allowed to fall on the second prism. Passing through the prisms and a lens, the image of the Sun and its surroundings was formed on the sensitive plate and photographed. By suitably moving the second prism images of all colors could be formed on the plate. When the ultra-violet portion of the spectrum was used, M. DESLANDRES found that coronal forms were photographed; but whether they were truly coronal or of instrumental origin he was unable to say. Professor HALE of Chicago made similar attempts last year, using the same general principles, and arrived at exactly the same results. He is now having constructed an instrument with which to continue the experiments, and he hopes to obtain results of practical value.

Our present limited knowledge of the corona depends upon observations made at eclipses with great haste and inconvenience. The experiments made by Messrs. HUGGINS, DESLANDRES and HALE do not offer much encouragement that the corona can be photographed and studied at our leisure. Successful results in this work would be extremely valuable: not only would our knowledge of the Sun be rapidly extended, but astronomers would largely be relieved from the responsibility of expensive and perilous voyages to observe eclipses. W. W. C.

CLASSIFICATION OF STELLAR SPECTRA.

Prof LOCKYER has communicated to the Royal Society a discussion of 443 photographs of 171 bright stars which have been obtained at Kensington and Westgate-on-Sea during the past two years. The spectra were formed by placing prisms of $7\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ and 45° , at different times, in front of the object-glass of a 6-inch refracting telescope. The discussion is based primarily upon the amount of continuous absorption in the violet end of the spectra. The varying thickness of the hydrogen and other lines is also taken into account, and several very interesting facts come out of the classification of the spectra. Thus, stars which show

no remarkable absorption in the violet are characterized by broad hydrogen lines. Stars which show a considerable absorption in the ultra-violet have thinner hydrogen lines, of about the same average thickness as those in the solar spectrum. Stars showing a very considerable amount of continuous absorption in the violet have very thin hydrogen lines. The same arrangement does not hold true for the other lines of the spectra, however, for "there are stars in which the hydrogen lines have the same average thickness, while the remaining lines are almost entirely different." An attempt has been made to arrange the stars with reference to their temperatures.

It will be remembered that a few years ago Prof. LOCKYER published his *Meteoric Hypothesis*, which contends that all celestial bodies are, or have been, swarms of meteorites, the difference between them being due to different stages of condensation. It is his opinion that these results confirm the conclusions previously arrived at from visual observations. Prof. LOCKYER's hypothesis depends very largely upon assumed wave lengths of lines in the bright-line spectra. Until recently these wave lengths were known only very roughly. The observations of nebular spectra by KEELER and others show pretty definitely that Prof. LOCKYER's assumptions regarding the principal nebular lines are not tenable. My observations of the bright lines in the WOLF-RAYET stellar spectra (see note respecting γ *Argus* below), show that the wave lengths of the lines are, for the most part, radically different from those assumed by Prof. LOCKYER. W. W. C.

DR. HENRY DRAPER'S PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MOON.

In these *Publications*, Vols. III, page 374, it was mentioned that it was the intention of Mrs. ANNA PALMER DRAPER to present to the LICK Observatory a selection of copies of the best negatives of the Moon made by Dr. HENRY DRAPER at his observatory at Hastings-on-Hudson in the years 1863-1880 with reflectors of 28 and 15.5 inches (made by himself), and with an 11-inch photographic refractor (made by ALVAN CLARK & SONS). The originals of these pictures are deposited in the Columbia College Observatory, New York. Mrs. DRAPER's kind intention has recently been carried out, and a set of copies has been presented to the observatory. They were made by Mr. MONELL, of the College Observatory, under the direction of Professor REES. The photographs were taken on the following dates. The "age" is approximate only: